

our country over partisan politics or ideology and failing to understand that if there need to be reforms in the Fed, let's reform them, but let's not walk away from an importantly critical individual who has made a difference in our economy and our Nation. For that reason, I urge my colleagues to terminate this filibuster—vote to end that—and then vote to confirm Ben Bernanke as the Chairman of the Federal Reserve.

I have been told I can speak until 3:20, but I will not take up all the time. As I said a moment ago, this is one of those moments where we need to step back and recognize the danger of our actions. This is not just a free vote. I know some people would prefer—they have the right to vote—to vote against the guy but hope he gets confirmed. That may work, but it is dangerously precarious. If we don't have 60 votes to end this filibuster, and if we don't produce the votes to confirm him, then I think this Congress, this body, regretfully, will have to bear the responsibility of abandoning the very people and situations we talk about today—jobs, the housing market, getting our economy back on its feet again—and anticipate the kind of reaction we will see in the markets and elsewhere, setting us back weeks, if not months or years, in our ability to get through this fragile period and allowing the hopes and aspirations and the confidence of the American people to grow.

I know it is an awful lot to stake the future of all that on just a nomination, but this is not some Assistant Under Secretary of some other agency. It is the central bank Chairman of the most central bank in the world. It is a critically important component in us continuing our path of economic recovery. We will bear the collective responsibility of failing to meet that obligation if we walk away from this obligation by either continuing this filibuster or defeating this nominee.

So I urge my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans—there is enough to battle about on how we are going to deal with these issues in the coming weeks, but on this matter let us send a message to the American people that we understand their frustrations, their worries, and we are doing everything we can to get us back on track again. Witness the President's remarks last evening.

You have a laser-like focus on the economy and job creation in our country. Don't make that effort fail because we send a message to our markets and the world that we cannot confirm an individual who saved us from an economic catastrophe in our country.

I urge my colleagues to pass the cloture motion to end debate and then, of course, to confirm Ben Bernanke as chairman of the Federal Reserve.

With that, I yield back the remainder of the time and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Under the previous order, the clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Ben S. Bernanke, of New Jersey, to be Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Ben S. Bernanke, of New Jersey, to be Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 77, nays 23, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 15 Ex.]

YEAS—77

Akaka	Enzi	Lugar
Alexander	Feinstein	McCaskill
Barrasso	Franken	McConnell
Baucus	Gillibrand	Menendez
Bayh	Graham	Mikulski
Bennet	Gregg	Murkowski
Bennett	Hagan	Murray
Bingaman	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Bond	Hatch	Nelson (FL)
Boxer	Inouye	Pryor
Brown	Isakson	Reed
Burr	Johanns	Reid
Burr	Johnson	Rockefeller
Byrd	Kaufman	Schumer
Cardin	Kerry	Shaheen
Carper	Kirk	Snowe
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Chambliss	Kohl	Tester
Coburn	Kyl	Udall (CO)
Cochran	Landrieu	Udall (NM)
Collins	Lautenberg	Voinovich
Conrad	Leahy	Warner
Corker	LeMieux	Webb
Dodd	Levin	Whitehouse
Dorgan	Lieberman	Wyden
Durbin	Lincoln	

NAYS—23

Begich	Feingold	Sanders
Brownback	Grassley	Sessions
Bunning	Hutchinson	Shelby
Cantwell	Inhofe	Specter
Cornyn	McCain	Thune
Crapo	Merkley	Vitter
DeMint	Risch	Wicker
Ensign	Roberts	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 77, the nays are 23. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time is yielded back. The

question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Ben S. Bernanke, of New Jersey, to be Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System?

Mr. ENSIGN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. SHAHEEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 70, nays 30, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 16 Ex.]

YEAS—70

Akaka	Enzi	McConnell
Alexander	Feinstein	Menendez
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Mikulski
Baucus	Graham	Murkowski
Bayh	Gregg	Murray
Bennet	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Hatch	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Inouye	Pryor
Bond	Isakson	Reed
Brown	Johanns	Reid
Burr	Johnson	Rockefeller
Burr	Kerry	Schumer
Byrd	Kirk	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Snowe
Carper	Kohl	Stabenow
Casey	Kyl	Tester
Chambliss	Landrieu	Udall (CO)
Coburn	Lautenberg	Udall (NM)
Cochran	Leahy	Voinovich
Collins	Levin	Warner
Conrad	Lieberman	Webb
Corker	Lincoln	Wyden
Dodd	Lugar	
Durbin	McCaskill	

NAYS—30

Begich	Feingold	Risch
Boxer	Franken	Roberts
Brownback	Grassley	Sanders
Bunning	Harkin	Sessions
Cantwell	Hutchinson	Shelby
Cornyn	Inhofe	Specter
Crapo	Kaufman	Thune
DeMint	LeMieux	Vitter
Dorgan	McCain	Whitehouse
Ensign	Merkley	Wicker

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid on the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Nebraska is recognized.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, I rise to make a parliamentary inquiry regarding the applicability of the Senate's cloture rules to the budget reconciliation process. Under the Congressional Budget Act which governs Senate procedure for consideration of a reconciliation conference report, the question is: Is a cloture vote necessary prior to a vote on adoption of the conference report?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, another question. Under the Budget Act, which limits the time for debate of a reconciliation conference report, how many hours are provided for debate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Ten hours.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Thank you. And finally, therefore, under no circumstances would a cloture vote be necessary or required prior to a vote on adoption of a reconciliation conference report?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IN PRAISE OF ANNE GALLAGHER

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize another great Federal employee. In the past year we have witnessed the most significant economic downturn since the Great Depression. In the 1930s, millions of Americans lost everything and there was no social safety net to catch those in the greatest need. Today we are fortunate that the Federal Government coordinates vital programs, preventing millions of Americans from slipping into the kind of poverty experienced in those days.

I think probably the most important agency involved in this effort is the Social Security Administration. Its mission is to provide a stable income for retired American workers and those who cannot work because of a disability.

In the words of the great revolutionary patriot Thomas Paine, "it is not charity but a right, not bounty but justice."

He wrote those words in 1797, when he published an early proposal for social security. It was only in the midst of the Great Depression that such a system was finally established by the Social Security Act of 1935.

Seventy-five years later, the SSA's important work continues. One of the great Social Security employees is Anne Gallagher, who has made a career of Federal Government work.

Anne, who grew up in Wilmington, DE and still lives there, has worked for Social Security for 8 years. As a child, Anne attended the Wilmington Friends School, and she later received her undergraduate degree from Mary Baldwin College. After pursuing further study in New York, she worked for 2 years in the broadcasting industry.

In 1976, Anne began a lifetime of public service, working for then-Senator Bill Roth, who was then the senior Senator of Delaware, in his Wilmington office. Her role as senior caseworker

for constituent services was to intercede on behalf of Delawareans with Federal agencies.

If you were a veteran who needed help accessing VA resources or benefits, Anne was the staff member in Senator Roth's office who would contact the VA for you. If you were trying to adopt a child from overseas but had an issue with the State Department that needed clearing up, Anne would clear it up.

It was during this time, when I was chief of staff to Delaware's junior Senator JOE BIDEN, that I first met Anne and witnessed firsthand her unmatched dedication and positive attitude. JOE BIDEN has wonderful caseworkers. They all thought very highly of Anne. And the two offices worked together seamlessly to serve the people of Delaware.

Anne handled important casework for Senator Roth for 7 years before deciding to take time off to raise her two daughters, who, by the way, both share their mother's passion for serving the public. But the call to serve was strong, and after 3 years away from Senator Roth's office, Anne returned. She continued working as an advocate for Delawareans until Senator Roth left office in 2001. At the same time, she still served as the legislative assistant for veterans affairs from 1994 to 1997.

In 2001, Anne spent several months working as the director of a nonprofit helping American families adopt children from overseas.

In 2002, she returned to government service when she became a Regional Public Affairs Specialist for the Social Security Administration. In this role, Anne serves as the Social Security congressional liaison for five States and the District of Columbia, which include 10 Senate offices and 43 House districts. The reports issued by her office help Members of Congress as well as other Federal, State, and local officials understand the status of Social Security distribution in their jurisdictions.

Throughout her work in Social Security and Senator Roth's office, Anne has earned a reputation for thoroughness, dedication, and a kind heart. I never met anyone who has dealt with Anne who did not like her, was not impressed with her kindness, her intelligence, and her ability to get things done. Once, while working for Senator Roth, Anne received a call from an elderly woman who had been in touch with her regarding a casework issue. It was in the midst of a snowstorm, and the woman, who lived alone, could not get to the grocery store for herself. So 45 minutes later Anne and her husband pulled up to the woman's house with a careful of groceries. Many of those she helped still keep in touch with her, even after 20 years.

I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring Anne Gallagher and thanking her for her service to the Nation and the State of Delaware. I also hope all Americans will recognize the impor-

tant contribution made by all who work for the Social Security Administration and all those who work for the Federal Government.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BURRIS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TIME FOR BOLD ACTION

Mr. BURRIS. Madam President, last night, just down the hall from this Chamber, my colleagues and I assembled with our friends in the House of Representatives to take part in a tradition as old as our Republic.

This is more than just a Presidential address.

It is mandated by the U.S. Constitution, and it is one of the great rituals of modern democracy, the practice of bringing the major officers of our government together to assess our national priorities.

Last night, President Obama laid out a bold vision for the years ahead, and a renewed commitment to the uniquely American ideals that make this country great.

So today, I would like to take this opportunity to discuss a few of the things we heard in yesterday's speech, and how our agenda will benefit the people of Illinois.

I am glad the President recognizes that this is not a time to change our priorities it is a time to recommit ourselves to the values and the ideas that the American people voted for in 2008.

The mandate for better policy could not have been more clear.

Voters want us to focus on job creation. They want us to help small businesses, repair our national economy, and invest in clean energy.

They want us to pass real health care reform, reduce the deficit, and keep corporate money separate from politics.

Under President Obama's leadership, my colleagues and I have already made significant progress on a number of these issues.

A year ago, we passed far-reaching economic recovery legislation that brought us back from the brink of disaster.

We voted to extend unemployment benefits, and keep sending help to the people who need it most during these difficult times.

Even today, we are poised to take up job creation and climate change bills, and are closer to passing comprehensive health reform than ever in our history.

We are examining ways to address the deficit, and in pursuit of that goal I believe we need to keep all options on the table.